

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-20 L-03 PM-07 INR-10 RSC-01 /056 R

DRAFTED BY EA/LC:SBTHOMSEN:FMT

APPROVED BY EA:MSTEARNS

EA/L:AMB. WHITEHOUSE

EA/LC:LMRIVES

L/EA:EVERVILLE(SUBS)

----- 079954

R 191703Z JUN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

S E C R E T STATE 131017

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PFOR, PINT, LA

SUBJECT:FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND RECOGNITION OF THE PRG

REF: A. VIENTIANE 4792; B. STATE 128189; C. VIENTIANE 4639

1. APPRECIATE REF A, ESPECIALLY THE HELPFUL DISCUSSION OF MISSION ACTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE ISSUES IN QUESTION. WE WERE, OF COURSE, PLEASED THAT SOUVANNA WAS ABLE TO GAIN DEFERRAL OF THESE ISSUES AND HOPE THAT HE WILL EMPLOY HIS UNIQUE POLITICAL TALENTS TO SIDETRACK THEM INDEFINITELY.

2. YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT THE INSTRUCTION IS A REFLECTION OF DEVELOPING CONCERN IN WASHINGTON OVER THE SITUATION IN VIENTIANE AS REPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN LAOS IS OF CONCERN IN WASHINGTON, NOT JUST FOR ITS OWN SAKE, BUT AS AN INDICATOR OF LPF INTENTIONS AND NON-COMMUNIST CAPABILITY TO STAND ITS GROUND, AND REF C CAUSED MANY IN WASHINGTON TO BELIEVE THAT THE PRESS FREEDOM ISSUE WAS IN SUBSTANTIAL DOUBT. GIVEN PAST LPF TACTICS AND DETERMINATION, WE MUST REMAIN CONCERNED AT

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THEIR ULTIMATE INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO THESE ISSUES.

3. THE TIMING OF YOUR CALL AND THE MODALITIES AND NUANCES
OF YOUR APPROACH TO SOUVANNA ARE LEFT TO YOUR OWN JUDGMENT.
WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT SOUVANNA SHOULD BE APPRISED OF

THESE WASHINGTON CONCERNS, NOT ONLY TO ASSURE THAT HE IS
AWARE OF THEM, BUT TACTICALLY TO GIVE HIM AMMUNITION
WHICH HE CAN USE AT HIS OWN DISCRETION TO COUNTER LPF,
NORTH VIETNAMESE, AND OTHER PRESSURES.

4. AMB. WHITEHOUSE HAS SEEN FOREGOING AND CONCURS. SISCO

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
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Draft Date: 19 JUN 1974
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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To: VIENTIANE
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